

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Language is the method of human communication. With language people can communicate to others; we use language to express feelings, thoughts and ideas. It is supported by Alwasilah (1992, p.1), states that people might not be exist without language. Therefore, language must be the essential one since it is the way we use to get the interaction with people.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.6), English is one of number of languages in the world which is decided as the international tool of communication. It happened at the end of the Second World War since the global changes especially in technology and commerce due to the Second World War generated a demand for an international language and the role fell to English. English is learned in around the world including in Indonesia which is used as the first foreign language; it is studied from kindergarten to the university. Moreover, people may learn English for their specific fields; it means that English itself is also learned for many areas. Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.6) stated:

As English became the accepted international language of technology and commerce, it created a new generation of learners who knew specifically why they were learning such as businessmen and women who wanted to sell their products, mechanics who had to read instruction manuals, doctors who needed to keep up with developments in their field and a whole range of students whose course of study included textbooks and journals only available in English.

Meanwhile, Learning English isn't piece of cake, not only we recognize and memorize a number of vocabularies but also we need to learn its grammar. It is the language rule which is studied in syntax field. It is the study how the words get arranged together to form sentences or utterances.

Veit (1986, p.6) gives the definition of grammar as a person's subconscious who has knowledge about language. He also adds that grammar consists of principle or rules that allow you to create an infinite number of possible sentences out of a finite number of words (Veit, 1986, p.6). In addition, Droga and Humphrey (2003, p.17) said that grammar is central to the organization of language and meaning, knowledge of grammar permits us to investigate and describe the ways in which words are selected, organized and sequenced within a sentence, a text to make meaning.

Therefore, to be able to arrange the words become sentences we need to understand how to put those words correctly and it is studied in grammar. It is stated by Leech, Deuchar, and Hoogenraac (1982, p.1) that learning grammar is also about learning how to speak properly and how to write good English. Thus mastering grammar makes our ideas are understood by people that we can communicate with others properly.

Moreover, as part of grammar, tense is the sentences which are spoken or written according to the time the activity happens. According to Nurhapidin (2008, p.1), tense is form of time in English; it defines how to make sentence arrangements that based on the time it happened and its formulas. We need to pay attention to whether the tense is present or past

tense since it is different between present and past in forming its verbs. In this study, the researcher specifies at past tense.

Based on the definition above, thus learning tenses is about learning verbs as stated by Greenbaum and Nelson (2002, p.55) that tense is a grammatical sort that talks about the time of the circumstance; the tense is indicated by the form of the verb. There are a number of verbs that commonly used to use the tenses besides regular verbs; it is irregular verb which has forms different from the regular tense forms. According to Frank (1972, p.61), in order to use the tense forms of irregular verbs, the learner of English must know their “principal parts”. The first part is the *simple former*; the second part is *past tense*, and the third is *past participle*.

Therefore, to be able to create sentences in the form of past tense, the students must master the irregular verbs since its form varies when it change into past tense. The title of the research is **“THE CORRELATION OF STUDENTS’ IREGULAR VERBS TOWARS STUDENTS’ UNDERSTANDING OF THE SIMPLE PAST TENSE”** (A Correlation Study to The Eighth Grade at SMPN 3 Ciparay).

B. The Research Questions

Based on the background above, the research problems are as follows:

1. What is the students’ irregular verbs mastery?
2. What is the students’ understanding of simple past tenses?
3. How significant is the correlation of students’ irregular verbs mastery towards students’ understanding of simple past tense?

C. The Aims of Research

The aims of the research are as follow:

1. To investigate the students' irregular verbs mastery.
2. To investigate the students' understanding of simple past tense.
3. To discover the correlation of students' irregular verbs mastery towards students' understanding of simple past tense.

D. The Significances of Research

The research is expected to offer benefits to the students' achievement in learning grammar. The following are the significances of the research expected:

1. To enhance students' motivation in learning Grammar and tenses
2. To recognize students' understanding about tenses especially simple past tense
3. To increase students' ability of arranging English sentences well.
4. To deepen the writer's knowledge of tenses
5. To increase students' irregular verbs acquisition, the understanding of simple past tense and its correlation

E. Rationale

An irregular verb is one of verb types which live by their own set of rules. It doesn't follow the simple system of adding "d" or "ed" in the end of the word like it is in regular verbs. It means that the spelling can be a little

complex; it follows pattern such as drink-drank, spring-sprang etc. Frank (1972, p.61) explained that irregular verbs are sometimes divided into strong verbs; those which form their past tense by means of an interval vowel change.

According to Wishon and Burks (1980, p.195), simple past tense is used to report a state or activity which can be recognized to a certain past time. Nurhapitudin (2008, p.117) also stated that simple past tense explains the activity that happened in the past and there is no relation to the event in the present time.

Considering the above statements, the research has two variables; variable X is the students' irregular verbs mastery and variable Y is the students' understanding of the simple past tense.



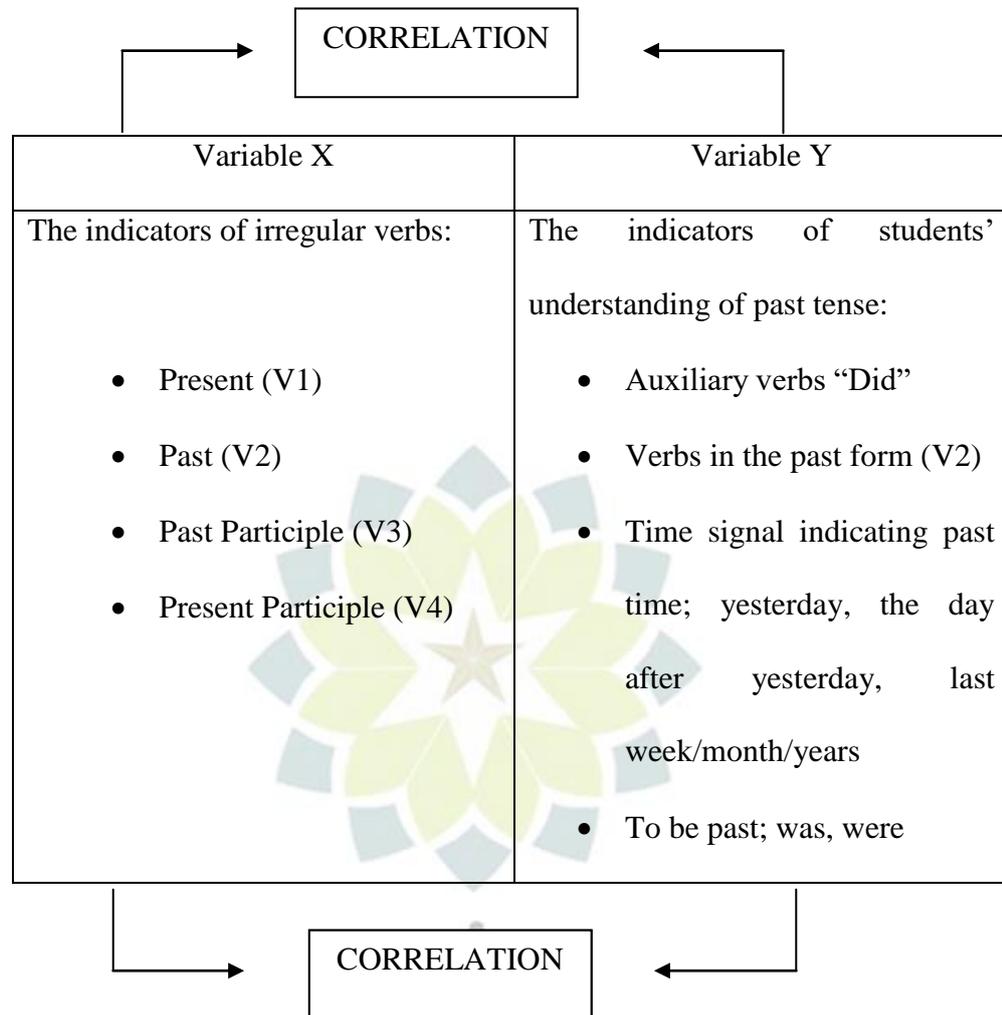


Figure 1. The schema of correlation between variable X and variable Y

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F. Hypothesis

According to Sugiyono (2011, p.96), "Hypothesis is a tentative assumption of research questions until it is proved through the data gained." What it is called tentative is since the assumption is just answered theoretically, not empirically yet. In this study, the writer will research two variables; the students' irregular verbs mastery of first grade SMPN 3 Ciparay as variable X and the students' understanding of simple past tense of the first grade SMPN 3 Ciparay as variable Y.

Based on the explanation above, the writer formulates the hypothesis as follows:

1. H_0 : there is no significant correlation between students' irregular mastery and students' understanding of simple past tense
2. H_a : there is significant correlation between students' irregular verb mastery and students' understanding of simple past tense

G. Method

The research design used in this study is quantitative design. Therefore, the research applied a statistic approach with a correlation analysis as mentioned by Sudjana (2005, p.179) that in statistic field, correlation is the relationship between two or more variables. Then, if there is correlation, the writer needs to measure how significant its correlation.

The design for this study is *ex post facto* since the writer has no control over the independent variable, meaning that independent variable has been administrated by the nature and there is no treatment and experiment conducted (Sudjana, 2009, p.56).

H. Steps of Research

1. Location

The research will be conducted at Junior High School, second grade of SMPN 3 Ciparay. The main reason why this location was chosen as it's suitable with the purpose of the research which observed

students' irregular verbs mastery and their understanding of the simple past tense.

2. Population

According to Sugiyono (2011, p.117), "Population is the general fields that comprises object/subject which have certain quality and features made by the writer to be learned and then concluded." Arikunto (2006, p.130) defines, "Population as the whole subject research." The population of this study is the first grade of SMPN 3 Ciparay.

3. Sample

Sugiyono, (2011, p.118) says:

Sample is a part of quantity and characteristics of population. If the population is large and is unlikely for the researcher to study, thus the researcher can use sample taken from the population. Whereas, the total of samples as follows: if the population is less than 100 respondents sample can be taken from all population, so this research of population. If the population more than 100 respondents, sample can be taken 10-15 % or more than 20-25 %."

The total of sample will be investigated is 22 students; 17 females and 5 males. It is merely taken from class VIII D.

I. Techniques of Collecting Data

To get data collected, the writer conducts a test. According to Sudjana (2010, p.100), "Test is measuring instrument that is given to obtain facts expected. The other tool used to measure the ability of knowledge, intelligence and the capability or instinct possessed by individual or group which can be given both orally or written".

Test is conducted to obtain the data of students' understanding of past tense and their mastery on irregular verbs.

J. Data Analysis

To analyze data that has been collected, the following steps are taken:

1. Testing Normality of Data

After collecting all the students' scores, the obtained data are coded and being analyzed. This study used descriptive statistic scales; therefore before displaying the data into a correlation test, the normality of the data must be founded.

To find out the normality of the data, the writer used Chi square. The steps are:

a. Making the frequency of distribution, by the steps of:

1) Determining Interval Class (K), by using the formula:

$$R = H - L + 1$$

(The high score – the lowest score)

(Sudjana, 2005, p.91)

2) Determining the length of class (P), by using the formula:

$$K = 1 + 3, 3 \log n$$

(Sudjana, 2005, p.130)

3) Determining the length of class (P), by using the formula:

$$P = R/K$$

(Sudjana, 2005, p.47)

b. Determining the central tendency, by following formula:

1) Determining Modus (Mo), by formula:

$$Mo = b + p \left(\frac{b_1}{b_1 + b_2} \right)$$

(Sudjana, 2005, p.77)

2) Determining Median (Me), by formula:

$$Me = b + p \frac{\left(\frac{1}{2n} - F \right)}{f}$$

(Sudjana, 2005, p.79)

3) Determining Mean, by using the formula:

$$x = \frac{\sum fixi}{\sum fi}$$

(Sudjana, 2005, p.70)

c. Determining the standard deviation (SD), by using the formula:

$$S = \sqrt{\frac{\sum fi(xi - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$$

Counting Variants by using the formula:

$$KV = \frac{S}{\bar{x}}$$

(Sudjana, 2005, p.95)

d. Making the table of observation frequency

Testing the distribution normality by using the formula:

Finding out *dk* (*derajat kebebasan/degree of freedom*) by the formula:

$$dk = K - 3$$

(Sudjana, 2005:273)

Determining table list with significance 0, 95 %

Examining normally by criterion:

If x^2 Count $<$ x^2 table, distribution normal

If x^2 Count $>$ x^2 table, distribution abnormal

2. Counting the value of the correlation coefficient

To find out the value of correlation, here there are several formulas can be used by criterion as follows:

- a. If two variables have normal distribution and linier regression so use the formula of Product Moment:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{(N \sum x^2 - \sum (Xi)^2) (\sum Y)^2 (n \sum Y - (\sum Y)^2))}}$$

(Arikunto, 2002:274)

- b. If one variable or both of them is not normal distribution or does not linier regression, so use the statistic of spearman correlation:

$$r_{xy} = 1 - \frac{6 \sum D^2}{N(N^2 - 1)}$$

(Arikunto, 2002, p.243)

- c. Simply, this formula can be used to count coefficient of correlation

$$r_{xy} = \frac{\sum xy}{\sqrt{\sum x^2 \sum y^2}}$$

(Sudjana, 2005, p.250)

d. Identification the degree of coefficient by criterion as follows:

0.0 – 0.20 : Very low correlation

0.21 – 0.40 : Low correlation

0.41 – 0.60 : Average correlation

0.61 – 0.80 : High correlation

0.81 – 1.00 : Very high correlation

(Arikunto. 2002, p.276)

3. Testing hypothesis

The hypothesis testing is conducted to determine whether the correlation coefficient is significant or not. In this study, the hypothesis used is null hypothesis. Null hypothesis (H_0) states that there is no a correlation between variable X and Y, or there is no differences between two groups variables. The null hypothesis here is that there is no correlation between students' irregular verb mastery and their understanding of the tenses.

After getting the value of r, testing hypothesis is conducted. In analyzing of the hypothesis, parametric statistic method is employed. To test the proposed hypothesis, the writer uses t-test since the using of the interval data (Sudjana, 2005, p.377)

The formula is:

$$t = r_{xy} \sqrt{\frac{n - 2}{1 - r_{xy}^2}}$$

Where:

r_{xy} =coefficient of correlation

n =Number of sample

(Sudjana, 2005, p.377)

The correlation can be taken from Sig (2-tailed). Then, the t observed is compared to the level of t table at the level of significance (α) =0.05 and the degrees of freedom= (n-2) if the t observed is equal to or greater than t table the null hypothesis can be rejected and the positive hypothesis is accepted.

